REAL WILDERNESS, 35 MILES FROM CITY, OFFERS IDEAL OUTING

Wyanokie Plateau of Ramapo Hills Made Accessible by Prof. Monroe

By ALBERT HANDY.

THE little girl looked up wistfully and remarked: "I'm hungry." Then before I had a chance to inquire which of several brands of candy she preferred she added: "Hungry for the hills."

"Do you know what that means?" she asked. "When you hear the winds calling to you from the mountain tops, when you see the tall pine trees like long, bony fingers beckoning to you from the summits, when you hate the seashore and the plains, when you want to get up nearer to heaven? It's a real hunger, just as real as when you are hungry for food."

"Stop a moment for breath," I interpolated as she paused. "The railroads have inconsiderately arranged their timetables so that you can't run up to either the White Mountains or the Adirondacks in the morning and return the same evening, but out in northern New Jersey, less than thirty-five miles from the town, is a pretty good wilderness, a land of lakes and streams and hills and woods, just the place to go gypsying."

"When can we go?" she inquired eagerly.

"It's the very best season for walking, let's go on Sunday," I said.

And so it was arranged.

Time was, less than five years ago, when you could get a very fair imitation of the wilderness in Palisades Interstate Park, opposite Dyckman street. Then the paths were steep and rocky, with an occasional fallen tree trunk over which to clamber. Then the owner of the small open motor boat which constituted the ferry charged from 15 to 25 cents to carry you across. To-day there is a smooth broad path up to Alpine and down to Edgewater, and a fine road for motors up the cliffs. To-day two fair sized ferryboats ply over the route and the fare is only 5 cents. The crowds have come and another chapter has been added to the volume entitled "Our Vanishing Wilderness."

But this other wilderness of which I had spoken I scarcely knew myself, so when we started early on a bright Sunday I had but vague ideas of whither we were bound. I knew that we were to purchase tickets for Wanaque-Midvale and turn our faces toward the west. I knew that some school man out in New Jersey who had a longing for the great wilderness when there was no vacation convenient had discovered and explored this lesser wilderness and in cooperation with the Appalachian Mountain Club, of which he was a member, had built several trails for the benefit of those whose knowledge of woodcraft and whose enthusiasm for the great outdoors did not admit of their adventuring into the uncharted forests. But this came near constituting the alpha and omega of my knowledge.

Police Commissioner Woods said that it was a beautiful country for walking, and spoke feelingly of a little place near the station where excellent chocolate ice cream could be had—which was interesting but scarcely illuminating. Justice Harrington Putnam and Assistant United States Attorney-General Bert Hanson were two other enthusiastic hikers who had recently visited the region, but neither could be reached.

It takes the train an hour and a half to cover the thirty-two miles between New York and the hyphenated station which was our destination. The town itself is not hyphenated; in fact there are two towns, Midvale and Wannaque, the latter name an invention of the Erie Railroad and to be added to its long list of sins of commission. The name is properly Wyanokie, meaning, in the language of the Delaware Indians who inhabited this valley a century and a half ago, sassafras.

We alighted in the midst of a blaze of autumn glory. To the east rose the Ramapo Hills, to the west the summits of the Wyanokie plateau. I heard an almost inaudible sigh; when the little girl sighs in that way it means satisfaction and approval. Having thus expressed herself she inquired relevantly, "Now where do we go?"

I pointed to one of the hills and responded vaguely, "Up there'" Then I corralled a small boy and inquired for the location of Blue Brook Mine and Prof. Monroe's lodge.

The boy looked blank. He had never heard of either. He did not know of any one who was better informed. Long experience should have taught me that the native knows nothing of his own country, but hope springs eternal. The fault was mine, however—I did not ask the right question. The trails are in many places marked by cairns of stone which the village youth demolish with unfailing regularity. Had I asked for the path marked by piles of stones I could doubtless have secured the desired information.

Presently we came upon a garage keeper who looked informative. He was. We were to turn to the left at Pool's hotel and continue along the road until we came to a turning to the right, but we were not to take that turn. Then we would come to another turning to the right, but we were not to take that either. Then we were to continue past some more turnings to the right until the road itself turned to the right directly into the mountains. Apparently this was the only possible way to go at this point. Yes, there was a path across the fields, he thought, but we had better not take it; we might get lost.

We thanked him and proceeded to the road of many crossings, a pleasant road leading up gradually over the ridge, away from the railway and the automobile traffic. Finally we reached a place, just before the crossing of the Wyanokie River, where the local topography did not coincide with the garage man's description. We paused, and at the only habitation in sight I spied an ancient man who might have passed for the oldest inhabitant. Him I addressed, but he denied any knowledge of Blue Brook Mine.

Despairing of adding to our store of knowledge from this source we passed on. And now we descried the familiar marks of a trail on the fence bars. We crossed the Wyanokie River and found more trail marks. Pausing to get the lay of the land and adjust our course, we observed that the old man was tottering after us.

Whether he had experienced a change of heart or an accession of knowledge in the brief interval since we had left him he did not tell us and we never found out. He did tell us that we were looking for what people called the Blue Mine, and he confirmed our belief that we had found the way; so we resumed our hike.

Over the fields and into the woods we went, along a well defined trail, now marked by white paint on the rocks and fences, now by blazes on the trees and by an occasional cairn of stones. Now we approached a valley from which a bluish gray mist appeared to arise. When we came nearer thee was no mist; the effect was produced by the thickly massed branches of dead and leafless trees. Then on through the wood, and out again upon a road which would have been the despair of any chauffeur.

We made a detour to a shack with the ever recurrent question upon our lips and were assured that we couldn't reach Blue Brook Mine in an automobile; and we had all the time fondly imagined that we looked more like hikers than motorists. Another three-quarters of a mile, keeping a sharp lookout for the trail marks, and we entered the woods again and commenced the ascent of the hillside.

Here the wilderness really began. On and up we went until the girl remarked that we must have covered considerably more than three miles without having discovered Blue Brook Mine. However, the mine and the lodge were merely incidents; we had come in quest of the wilderness, and the wilderness was around us and the spirit of the wilderness had entered our souls.

Presently we reached a parting of the ways and the familiar "A. M. C." sign—for the benefit of those who have never tramped in the White Mountains it may be said that these cryptic letters indicate Appalachian Mountain Club—indicated that to the west was the trail to Wyanokie High Point, to the north led the path to the Fern Trail, Pine Paddies, Wolf Den and Assiniwikam. We hesitated. Wolf Den sounded adventurous, Assiniwikam mysterious but the High Point held much of promise in its name.

Again I wished that we might find Prof. Monroe's lodge. I drew out my whistle and blew a blast—it's a nice red whistle which I can readily see if I drop it to the ground, but its chief virtue is the loud, shrill note which it emits. We heard the echoes, but we heard no other sound.

"Let's take the Fern Trail," said the little girl in a tone of finality, "and go to Pine Paddies; it sounds so nice and woodsy."

That settled it, but I suspected that the girl didn't want me to blow again.

First the path led up hill, but soon our eyes were arrested by the sign marked "Fern Trail." We turned sharply to the right and began to descend through the deep forest and down into mossy glens, over streams and up rocky hillsides, twisting here and turning there. Presently I stopped and gazed upward.

"I suppose we haven't lost the trail," I remarked, "but we've almost doubled up on our tracks and we've made nearly a complete circuit."

"I don't care," the girl responded; "it's lovely here and the name's just right. Did you ever see so many ferns?" Subsequently we learned that there were at least eighteen varieties.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by a loud halloo. I drew out my whistle and replied, while the girl's hands flew to her ears. There was an answering shout and in a couple of minutes three hikers appeared on the trail coming toward us.

All day Saturday and all that Sunday, they told us, they had been searching the mountainside for Blue Brook Mine and the Lodge. They had just come from Wolf Den, which wasn't nearly as adventurous as it sounded; in fact all through the walk the only four footed animal which we saw was a coon that dashed across our trail, although two deer had been seen on the mountainside only a few days before.

We had a conference, and it appeared that the purposes of both parties would be best served by taking the Wyanokie High Point Trail. Having made an almost complete circuit with the exception of a few hundred feet, it was easy to return to the junction point, and we continued the ascent of Wyanokie. And now the way became steeper; then we met a sign which announced "Just winter."

It was obvious that the Lodge was not above this level, but the other party having come thus far decided to go to the summit. To the novice mountain climber the first few ascents present a series of surprises. At each of a dozen points he is quite sure that the tiptop is just beyond, and then he discovers that what he took for the summit is only a ridge or ledge, only one of the many stages before the summit is attained. Then when he is quite convinced that the mountain is of infinite height as well as of infinite variety he is at last rewarded by reaching the ultimate height.

"There's one advantage about climbing a mountain," remarked the little girl; "you don't have to say that you've lost your breath. All that you need say is that you've stopped to look at the view—that is, if you've got breath left to say anything at all."

As we had all stopped at this point to look down the valley we laughed and proceeded. And now the trees were fewer and more stunted, the bare spots increased, then rock, then the summit. Oh, the glory of it! even though we were only 1,150 feet above sea level.

To the west far as the eye could see were mountains and forests—no roads, no smoke arising from locomotive or habitation to put a blot upon the landscape. Directly beyond was Buck Mountain, 1,240 feet, highest of these summits; to the north more mountains and forests, and in a cut between two hills we perceived the place where lies Greenwood Lake.

In the direction from which we had come were the Ramapo Hills, a riot of color in the light of the descending sun, and in the hazy distance we thought that we discerned the southern Catskills. Nearer was the valley of the Pompton, with the great du Pont powder works strung along over many miles from Haskell down to Wayne, picturesque at this distance but—not the wilderness. When the atmosphere is very clear the high buildings of New York may be seen but on this day they were not visible.

Out of the blackness of the forest below a young hawk winged its solitary flight into some unknown beyond, but this was not the season for birds. In early June, when the bird census of the United States was taken, enumerators, including Ernest Ingersoll and Prof. Lockwood of Columbia, counted forty-eight different species of feathered inhabitants among these hills.

We had found at the summit, in addition to the view and the exhilaration, another couple from whom the location of the lodge was learned. But the girl and I had lost all interest in the lodge. We took the trail which leads over the summit into the west. Down into a valley, then up again on the next mountain, then into a forest so deep that the sun could scarcely penetrate through the trees, then over some rocks on which there was fresh paint.

"The trail builders must be out," I remarked. "That paint has been there for less than twelve hours."

I had just previously put my finger on the paint.

Then still on toward the sinking sun, then we became aware that something was approaching. We perceived a paint pot and a red bandanna handkerchief. It subsequently transpired that the one was on the head and the other in the hand of a man whom we knew instinctively to be Prof. Monroe in his working clothes. The latter conclusion was not instinctive, it was obvious.

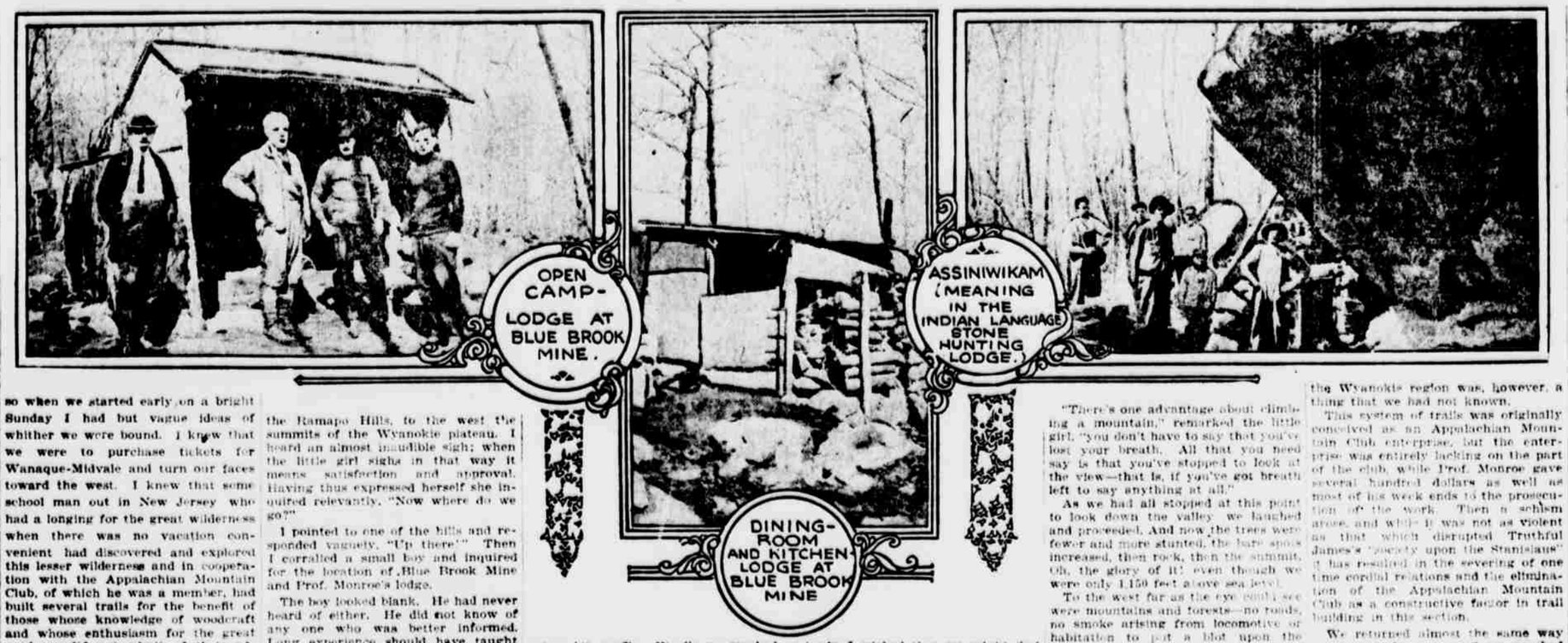
Prof. Monroe cordially invited us to return to the lodge—that elusive lodge—and have supper. But we had in mind that we might go to Macopin. Yes, Macopin was about ten miles away, and the trail which was originally an Indian trail, and hadn't been used much since the red man had involuntarily abandoned that part of the country, was in very bad condition. Or we might continue on into Haskell, some four miles off, but we had better return with him and have supper.

We succumbed. That Prof. Monroe had been building trails was obvious. That he had, almost unaided, constructed the twenty miles of trail in the Wyanokie region was, however, a thing that we had not known.

This system of trails was originally conceived as an Appalachian Mountain Club enterprise, but the enterprise was entirely lacking on the part of the club, while Prof. Monroe gave several hundred dollars as well as most of his week ends to the prosecution of the work. Then a schism arose, and while it was not as violent as that which disrupted Truthful James's "society upon the Stanislaus" it has resulted in the severing of one time cordial relations and the elimination of the Appalachian Mountain Club as a constructive factor in trail building in this section.

We returned almost the same way that we had come until we reached the lodge, hidden in the woods and several hundred feet away from the trail, so that its owner may not be disturbed by an access of unwelcome guests. There is a rude hut which serves as dining room and kitchen and an open camp which provides sleeping quarters, while near at hand a brook ripples down the hillside. A neighboring woodpile furnished seats, except for our host, who was busily engaged in preparing supper.

Suddenly the little girl stopped short in the middle of a sentence and exclaimed, "Oh, look!"



Indian Trails Restored in Region Charming to Any Lover of Nature

I followed her gaze. The mountainside above was bathed in a wonderful golden red glow, and far, far beyond through a vista of reddish gold trees was a copper sky. Then slowly it faded and vanished away, and darkness was upon all the earth.

Supper over—it takes a passmaster of the art of the camper to produce with desiccated foods such a supper as we had just eaten—the dishes washed and put away and the camp in order, we prepared to descend to the station. The girl was regarding the firmament.

"I think," she said at last, "perhaps they have the same sun and moon in town that they do in the country, but I know that they must have different stars out here, they're so much brighter and so many more of them."

It is in itself an adventure going over a mountain trail after dark, even with the flickering light of a lantern to show the way and an experienced mountaineer as guide. But the adventure was safely compassed. After crossing the Wyanokie River we took the trail again, instead of the road which had been our route in the morning, and came to Yapewi, which in the Indian language means "Rock rises out of the water."

Here in the early days the tribes assembled in solemn conclave; they came over the trail from Newfoundland and Macopin and down from the Ramapo Hills; they came in their canoes down the river from Greenwood Lake and up from Pompton. In later days conferences between whites men and Indians were held on the great bare rock which rises out of the Wyanokie River.

But our own conference on local traditions was suddenly broken up by a reminder that the last train does not wait for belated mountaineers. We hurried on to the station. Then the train. The day was over, and the wilderness and its legends were but a beautiful memory, the stuff of which dreams are made.

M. QUAD COMES BACK WITH A LITTLE PIECE FOR "THE SUN"

FOR forty years Mr. and Mrs. Bowser have been squabbling daily over every conceivable subject, usually culminating on Sunday morning with threats of the divorce court. During all these years there have been few things on the face of the earth that the vainglorious and eruptive Bowser did not think he could improve upon if given time to display his skill, and with long suffering patience the practical Mrs. Bowser has been endeavoring to persuade him that the only genius he possessed was his ability to start a rumpus."

Mr. and Mrs. Bowser are still very much alive and their creator, Charles B. Lewis, or M. Quad, as he is familiarly known, is still an active newspaper man. Mr. Lewis also continues to write of the philosophic Brother Gardner and the Lime Kiln Club.

Mr. Lewis was a contemporary of Bob Burdette, George W. Peck, Eugene Field, Bill Nye, Eli Perkins, Artemus Ward and Petroleum V. Nasby and he is the only survivor of these humorists of a generation ago.

"I'm not as chipper as I used to be," said Mr. Lewis one afternoon last week as he returned to his home in Borough Park, Brooklyn, from a walk. "Rheumatism and bronchitis are wearing on the constitution.

"Up to two years ago I did all my own work on the typewriter, but now I have to call on my granddaughter for assistance. I'll be 75 years old next February and I'm afraid I'd cut a sorry figure at skipping the rope."

"But Mr. Bowser wouldn't have any trouble in performing the feat," it was suggested.

A bright smile lighted up Mr. Lewis's face and he chuckled softly.

"Bowser! the old fool; he would try it anyway. But I like the old rascal and I think he's the pet of all my characters, just because he's a plain, everyday man with the common failings of humanity.

"There's hardly one of us who does not believe that somewhere in our makeup there are slumbering possibilities of greatness—a great orator, for instance, should the occasion call for burning words and had we foreseen the incident and prepared for it; or a great poet if something within us would only break and allow us to give to the world an impassioned song of pent up thoughts and emotions. Poor old Bowser, he embodies all our dreams and is made the goat. He is simply a composite picture of the common man with secret longings for unobtainable things.

"In the forty years of the Bowsers' career I have had thousands of letters from men and women concerning them. The women invariably say something like this: 'I am sure you must know my husband or you could never draw such a lifelike character.' A lawyer friend once took me to task for making Bowser attempt to learn to play the saxophone after he was 50 years old. He said no sane man would do such a thing and that I made myself ridiculous. It was only a short time afterward that I learned from his wife that the lawyer had long cherished a secret ambition to become a musician and that their garret was littered with a dozen different kinds of musical instruments.

"My pen name? Well, I'm a printer by trade—or was—and learned the business thoroughly out in Michigan about sixty years ago. In those days, when all type was set by hand, we started each paragraph with what we called an em quad to give it an indention. It was the basis of all type measurement in those days, just as it is now. The name had a fascination for me and when I began to write I adopted it as a pen name and have signed M. Quad to all my stuff for the last forty years.

"Josh Billings and Artemus Ward were a little before my time, but I knew fairly well most of the others who have contributed to newspaper humor for the last fifty years. Bob Burdette and I played hide and seek during our acquaintance for a number of years. He was on the Burlington *Hawkeye* and I on the Detroit *Free Press*. We frequently arranged to meet, but something always interfered.

"The story of how Burdette began to write for publication is rather interesting. His wife was an invalid and most of his verse and short stuff were written solely for her entertainment. One day he was talking to Frank Hatton, who later became Postmaster-General under Harrison. Hatton was then editing the Burlington *Hawkeye*.

"'Bob,' said Hatton, 'when you get through reading your stuff to your wife hand it over to me and I'll print it.'

"One of the first things he turned over was his famous ode to the printing office towel. This is part of it:

"'Over and under was blacker than thunder
And daily out on a more inkier hue,
Until one windy morning without any warning,
It fell on the floor and was broken in two.'

"The most solemn man who ever wrote anything in the form of humor was George W. Peck. If he saw anything humorous in the doings and mischief making pranks of the little Peck he never let on, and after he became Governor I've often wondered if he wasn't ashamed of the little imp.

"Humor is purely a relative term. One form of it is described as refined, another as coarse; some prefer the slapstick variety, while a ridiculous situation is pleasing to others. A paragraph or story that appeals to one man as extremely funny would make another man pull a face as solemn as an undertaker's. A Chinaman will sit with a solemn face through the best comedy ever written, yet let a slapstick actor appear on a variety stage and bury a make believe hatchet in the made up skull of his partner and that Celestial will turn loose a yell that will raise your hair.

"A Philadelphia newspaper wrote me a few years ago and asked my opinion of America's greatest humorist. I replied that there was no such thing as a greatest humorist. Every humorist has his individual following and what would please one set of men would be of no interest to another set."

Charles B. Lewis.

PRIVATE BANKERS URGING REMIGRATION OF THEIR CLIENTS

By LAJOS STEINER.

EVER since the European war commenced the inflow of new arrivals of those races which for the past three decades composed the bulk of our immigrants has stopped. So has the outflow of departing immigrants. There are no "green hands" any more. They are veterans, all of them, fighting with hammer, pickax and similar weapons, in the great army of American industries, and winning glorious battles for our American prosperity.

But the forces which have hitherto accomplished the remigration of some 400,000 of our thrifty resident peasants, in each normal year, are more effective than ever. The resident agents of certain central European Governments are busy, as never before, in the obstruction of our immigrants to absorb Americanization, so that they shall return "home" after the war is over. Their most efficient aids are private banks.

Moneyed remigrants will be needed in central Europe hereafter, more so even than before. The cost of the war will have to be paid, somehow, by the taxpayers. Remigration would be a harvest of commissions for private banks.

Cupidity, greed, envy, and what is worst in human nature are one and all brought into play for the stimulation of the exportation of savings and remigration, when the latter will again be possible. Seductive tales are told how a fellow with some cash could, after the war, take advantage of the victims of the war; that opportunities will be plenty in the land of origin, or in a conquered one, to secure the property of the dead or their orphans.

To make bad conditions worse, the colonization of this sort of residents on American farms has been unsuccessful. Those Americans who have land for colonization care apparently and mainly for immediate profits only. The example of the victims of American land sharks breaks the spirit of enterprise of many who would engage in farming in this country. Consequently, it is easy to influence the land hungry resident to return to the native country.

It is estimated that some 1,200,000 steerage tickets have been sold by this time to resident peasant immigrants who are to return to their central European countries of origin at the close of the war.

The omnipresent private banker exploits the several psychological factors to the extreme limit. There are over ten thousand of this sort of parasite "banks" in the industrial sections of the United States. Failures are frequent, especially in small places. The newspapers report but exceptional cases, the foreign language press in extreme instances only.

But five States in the Union namely, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Ohio, provide legislation for the regulation of this sort of banks. Even of these one, New Jersey, exempts those whose business is admittedly the exportation of savings. The States tolerate all abuses along these lines unmolested; consequently Illinois had recently a veritable epidemic of private bank failures.

The searchlight of publicity thrown upon this sort of abuses will help much. An efficient cure of this malady is the practical remedy made available now by the Union Pacific system. Its passenger traffic manager, Gerrit Fort, has just completed arrangements whereby qualified resident immigrants may secure farms in the United States and, unlike the victims of colonisation sharks, thrive on the newly acquired farms. The Chicago Title and Trust Company furnishes, as trustee, sixty acres of irrigated and productive land with buildings at healthy location to such colonists on ten annual payments, the first instalment payable at the end of that year in which crops have been raised.

If the craft, perseverance and expense at present squandered for the stimulation of remigration and the exportation of the savings of our immigrants were concentrated upon the satisfaction of their land hunger in this country conditions would soon change for the better. Millions of idle acres would produce foodstuffs, millions of dollars would become invested in American agriculture, our best immigrants would become Americanized, those "bankers" who at present are a source of evil and who could become agents for the sale of American farms would earn commissions for such sales, and their income would be a legitimate one. The United States Postal Savings Bank should be made available for immigrants, so that they could keep their savings in this country, become interested in American opportunities, in time buy American farms, and become thoroughly Americanized.

The process of bringing uninformed immigrants under the yoke of unscrupulous men operating in the guise of banking should be discontinued, and with it that power which alienates our residents from Americanization. This power is exerted by a system which keeps away the masses of our resident peasant immigrants from American farms, consummates the exportation of their savings and causes their remigration. The individual immigrant is powerless to resist the dominant influences of this system. On American farms these immigrants would be new and efficient elements of our national strength.